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26 MAY 1972

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of National Reconnaissance Office
SUBJECT : NRP Advanced Technology Policy

1. As you know, in recent weeks there have been a number of discussions concerning the NRP Advanced Technology activities. While these discussions have ranged broadly, they have focused on the Applied Research/Applied Technology (AR/AT) and Advanced Development budgetary line items and how these monies could be most efficiently and effectively administered. The most recent of these exchanges was convened by [Redacted] at the conclusion of the annual AR/AT development program review.

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2. I have been concerned about a number of questions relating to these areas of NRP activities, and I would like to suggest that this is the time to initiate a general, high level review of the entire NRP Advanced Technology activities, both those conducted within program line items and those separately identified. To this end I would like to encourage you to convene an appropriate senior group to review all aspects of the AR/AT as well as Advanced Development within the NRP.

3. I have attached to this memorandum one suggestion on how NRP administration of these matters might be revised. While this suggestion does not cover all issues and is not unique in any regard, it is a concrete illustration of what would constitute a major step in the direction of improving utilization of critical and at the same time limited resources. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters further with you. I am prepared to put forth more specific suggestions on how we might proceed if you share my concern on these matters.

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NRO review(s)
completed.

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CARLE E. DUCKETT
Deputy Director

for

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Science and Technology

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I. NRP Advanced Technology Policy

1. The NRP budget currently contains a large collection of line items; some of them are program oriented and some of them are functionally oriented. There is no clearly stated policy on what types of programs should be contained in which line item. In particular, there is no uniform practice in what is appropriate to be carried in ongoing program budgets and what is to be carried in Advanced Research/Advanced Technology (AR/AT) line items, Advanced development line items, etc. This paper suggests a clarification of these budget organization issues.

2. While the NRO has evolved an effective and efficient means of administering program acquisition and operations budgets, procedures for allocating and controlling the AR/AT and Advanced Development elements of the budget are administered in a haphazard and poorly defined fashion. This paper suggests an alternative set of procedures for handling these line items in the NRP budget.

II. Budget Organization

1. The NRP budget could logically be grouped into three major categories: (1) program acquisition and operations line items; (2) program supporting AR/AT line items; and (3) a general AR/AT line item. (There are a number of miscellaneous additional line items such as film procurement and processing which are well handled as is and are not treated in this paper.)

2. Program acquisition and operations line items would contain only those funds against approved system objectives and requirements. These funds would be utilized only for systems development, hardware procurement, and ongoing operations. These funds would not be used for exploratory activities which might lead to eventual systems changes. However, when a system change is approved for implementation, the funding for this change would then be included in these line items.

3. The program supporting AR/AT line items would be identified with a particular ongoing program activity. The objective of these funds would be to develop components, subsystems, or techniques which, if successfully demonstrated as feasible, might be incorporated into ongoing

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programs to advantage. Activity under these line items would be limited to studies, breadboard prototype equipment, and experiments with the end objective of assessing and/or demonstrating feasibility. No satellite flight qualification or satellite flight hardware procurement would be conducted with program supported AR/AT funds. If the given component or subsystem is selected for eventual incorporation into an ongoing program, final design, qualification testing, and hardware procurement would be conducted in the program acquisition and operations line items. Only AR/AT programs which have been specifically identified as program motivated would appear in these line items.

4. The general AR/AT line item would be used to fund technology development generally applicable to satellite reconnaissance activities but not necessarily specifically identified with a single ongoing activity. The general AR/AT line item could be divided into three categories: (1) imaging systems technology; (2) SIGINT systems technology; and (3) general spacecraft technology.

III. NRO Planning, Budget, and Management of AR/AT Line Items

1. The field elements would submit to the NRO on an annual basis an AR/AT program plan. This program plan will cover both program related AR/AT and general AR/AT categories. This program plan could be specific as to the objectives of the various planned activities and emphasize supporting evidence on need for conducting the recommended programs.

2. The D/NRO would establish a funding level by major category (program related AR/AT and for each of the three subcategories under general AR/AT). The D/NRO would not approve specific program elements within these general categories. The field elements would have discretionary authority on the use of approved funds within these categories but within the general constraints of their previously submitted plans.

3. Prior to initiation of specific program activity, the field would be required to notify the D/NRO and other concerned field elements. This notification would be required thirty (30) days before any committing contractual action was undertaken. Notification would include definition of work to be performed, schedule of this work.

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product to be produced by work, amount of funding and contractor identification. In addition, the field elements would continue to report to the NRO Comptroller by contract commitments and obligations as is currently the practice.

4. Field elements would be charged with ensuring full coordination and information exchange. The field elements would be required to notify the D/NRO and other concerned field elements upon completion of a program and also the dissemination of relevant reports and/or test results generated by the program.

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